



United States Department of Agriculture

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the Chief  
Information Officer

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW  
Washington, DC  
20250

May 1, 2019

**Delivered via Electronic Mail**

Austin Evers  
1030 15th Street, N.W.  
Suite B255  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Email: [foia@americanoversight.org](mailto:foia@americanoversight.org)

**RE: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request 2019-DA-01987-F  
Interim Response**

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the first interim response to the February 4, 2019, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Departmental FOIA Office (DFO). The request seeks the following records:

“...communications...between (a) C. Boyden Gray or any person acting on his behalf, and (b) any of the individuals listed below or any person acting on their behalf, such as an administrative assistant or scheduler.

1. Sonny Perdue
2. Heidi Green
3. Ray Starling.”

The request guidance indicates these records are sought in an effort “to shed light on the role, if any, that this GOP donor is playing in shaping policy in the Trump administration.”

Your request is being processed under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

A search for responsive email records was conducted by the Office of the Chief Information Officer’s (OCIO) telecommunications provider, the Client Experience Center (CEC). This provider performs network services for OCIO, including electronic messaging operations, blackberry, mobile device management (MDM), file and print, remote access, voice, network, service desk, and other application services. CEC’s search produced no responsive records.

The DFO will continue processing the remaining portion of your FOIA request. Upon issuance of a final response, you will be advised of your right to appeal this and any other DFO determination.

Austin Evers  
FOIA Case No. 2019-DA-01672-F

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Randolph Ballard at 202-205-9548 or electronically at [randolph.ballard@usda.gov](mailto:randolph.ballard@usda.gov) or [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov).

You may seek dispute resolution services from the DFO's FOIA Public Liaison, Ms. Ravoyne Payton at [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov).

Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, Room 2510, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001; email at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202-741-5770; toll-free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

The DFO Team appreciates the opportunity to assist you in this matter.

Sincerely,

**ALEXIS  
GRAVES**

Digitally signed by  
ALEXIS GRAVES  
Date: 2019.05.01  
10:36:31 -04'00'

Alexis R. Graves  
Departmental FOIA Officer  
Office of the Chief Information Officer



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the General Counsel  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250-1400

October 4, 2019

**Delivered via Electronic Mail**

Austin Evers  
1030 15th Street, N.W.  
Suite B255  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Email: [foia@americanoversight.org](mailto:foia@americanoversight.org)

**RE: Final Response for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request No.  
2019-DA-01987-F**

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the Departmental FOIA Office's (DFO) final response to the above-referenced FOIA request, for the following records:

All records reflecting communications... between (a) C. Boyden Gray or any person acting on his behalf, and (b) any of the individuals listed below or any person acting on their behalf, such as an administrative assistant or scheduler

1. Sonny Perdue
2. Heidi Green
3. Ray Starling.

From January 20, 2017, through the date the search is conducted.

On May 1, 2019, an interim response was provided to you pertaining to the searches of the Outlook email accounts of Sonny Perdue, Heidi Green and Ray Starling.

Your request was processed under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

A search for responsive records was conducted by the DFO's telecommunications provider, the Client Experience Center (CEC). The CEC provides comprehensive, fee-for-service information technology (IT) associated operations, security, and technical support services to USDA end users, as well as implements and manages enterprise IT solutions for users Department-wide.

The Skype accounts and the calendars associated with Sonny Perdue, Heidi Green and Ray Starling were searched for the period of January 20, 2017 to February 14, 2019, which is the cutoff date for responsive records.

No responsive records were identified as a result of the CEC's searches.

You may appeal the adequacy of the search by email at [USDAFOIA@usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@usda.gov), or by mail to Inga Bumbarly-Langston, Deputy General Counsel, Room 101-W, Jamie L. Whitten Federal

Austin Evers  
2019-DA-01987-F

Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-0103. Your appeal must be in writing, and it must be received no later than 90 calendar days from the date of this letter. The OGC will not consider appeals received after the 90 calendar-day limit. Appeals received after 5:00 p.m. EST will be considered received the next business day. The appeal letter should include the FOIA tracking number listed above, a copy of the original request, the DFO's response to your original request, and a statement explaining the basis of your appeal. For quickest possible handling, the subject line of your email, the appeal letter, and its envelope, if applicable, should be marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." You should also reference FOIA No. 2019-DA-05797-F.

You may seek dispute resolution services from the DFO's FOIA Public Liaison, Ms. Camille Aponte. Ms. Aponte may be contacted by telephone at 202-690-5260, or electronically at [Camille.Aponte@usda.gov](mailto:Camille.Aponte@usda.gov) or [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov).

You also have the option to seek assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). Please visit <https://ogis.archives.gov/mediation-program/request-assistance.htm> for information about how to request OGIS assistance in relation to a FOIA request.

Provisions of the FOIA allow us to recover part of the cost of processing your request. In this instance, no fees will be charged.

If you have any questions regarding the processing of this request, please contact Ms. Stephanie Ostrowski at (202) 205-9548, or electronically at [stephanie.ostrowski@usda.gov](mailto:stephanie.ostrowski@usda.gov) or [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov). For additional information regarding USDA FOIA regulations and processes, please refer to the information available online at [www.dm.usda.gov/foia](http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia).

The DFO Team appreciates the opportunity to assist you with this matter.

Sincerely,

ALEXIS GRAVES

Digitally signed by ALEXIS  
GRAVES  
Date: 2019.10.04 13:25:16  
-04'00'

Alexis R. Graves  
Departmental FOIA Officer  
Office of the General Counsel